

THE
CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

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SHORT SERMONS.—NO. II.

“Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,”
&c. MICAH, vi. 6, 7.

To worship, adore and serve Jehovah, from pure and dignified motives, inspires the soul with a serenity and glory, to which the ignorant, superstitious and bigotted are real strangers. Enlarged and exalted views of the Divine character, with corresponding exercises of devotion, will naturally soften the feelings, regulate the affections, and influence the conduct of christians. Devotion, springing from such principles, will be voluntary, solemn and sanctifying; bowing down the loftiness of the proud, and bringing to naught the haughtiness of the terrible. Bringing its numerous votaries to a level, “pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father,” imparts a mildness, benevolence and reciprocity of disposition, which the wise and prudent would ever wish to enjoy, in common with all rational creatures. Such a disposition would prove an heavenly opiate, soothing the pains, and woes and sufferings, to which all are in some measure incident, in a vail of tears. Real adoration, so far from “shooting arrows dipped in wormwood and gall,” “brings to the soul the balm of Gilead,” healing to the wound inflicted by cruelty’s envenomed dart. So far from demanding a wreath of thorns to deck the brow and distort the natural expression of the countenance, crushing the christian with the burthen of present distress, or distracting him with the apprehension of impending, interminable wrath, it requires him to love the Lord with all his soul, and his neighbor as himself.

The design of religious worship and praise is to regulate the desires, feelings and thoughts of imperfect and sinful creatures; to encourage and strengthen the disposition to virtue, and suppress, overcome and eradicate every propensity to vice. What, but a realizing and impressive sense of the divine Omnipresence, will expose to their own inspection, the iniquitous designs of the ungodly and hypocritical, and pursue them through the labyrinth of excuses and cavils, till they are destitute of a retreat? The ways of wicked men, like the serpent's meandering path, are mysterious, crooked and difficult to be discovered. As well might we follow the serpent on the rock or in the water, unseen, as to explain the motives of the grossly wicked, in the frequent violation of laws, *obedience* to which is consistent with reason, religion and common sense. In the secrecy and solemnity of devotion, when the mind is disengaged from the cares of the world, and the soul is enlarged by divine contemplations, and the light of immortal truth and love, measurably illuminates the intellectual region, lasting impressions are not unfrequently made on the heart, and the worshipper is led to discoveries, to which he was before a stranger; his numerous sins and iniquities are set in order before him, and, humbling himself in dust and ashes, it is his penitential prayer that his transgressions may be forgiven. A new determination is formed in the soul; celestial virtue is preferred to detestable vice, and all are led to rejoice in the fruits of so glorious a reformation. Then is the convert seen rejoicing in that benevolence which shines and speaks in every object around us, and acknowledges the condescension and goodness of God, in requiring us to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly in his presence. This is a developement of the mysterious object of christian worship; and a succinct and comprehensive answer to the interrogation in the text, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?" For the encouragement and support of the charitable and rational, it may be observed, that it has the sanction of that Being, in whom angels and all holy beings confide. By this exposition of religious duty, variety is regulated, apparent contradictions harmonized and mysteries resolved. Truth divine, in full orb-splendor, illuminates the pathway of the sincere inquirer for Zion.

Is the soul convinced of its own unworthiness, and with a depression of spirits, bordering on despair, led to inquire, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" The reply of inspiration is ready and definite;—"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; *cease to do evil; learn to do well*; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord*: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Are we conscious of frequent departures from virtue's consecrated path, and disposed to veil our faces as with sackcloth, and bowing down to the dust, exclaim, "Save, Lord, or we perish"—Jehovah answers from between the Cherubims, "Let the *wicked forsake his way*, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: let him *return unto the Lord*, for he will have mercy, and unto God for he will abundantly pardon."

While the worshipper at Mammon's golden shrine is counting over his thousands, which for half a century have laid unused, do his fingers recoil on touching the rebuking coin, while his cheeks redden, or his blood freezes, at the recollection of the means by which it was accumulated? Does he sigh, and in bitterest reflections become his own accuser, muttering, as he points—"This was obtained by unlawful usury—that was the price of sacrificed honor—the other accrued from, alas me! from perjury! but there is the *chiding* silver and gold, that honesty designed for the starving widow's and her orphan children's support; but I robbed them of the scanty substance, which a dying but tender husband and father, bequeathed for their maintenance.' If this be no chimera, but the sad memorial of human depravity, may the voice of inspiration and reason convince them that honesty and uprightness of conduct would constitute a new and far happier era, in the calendar of life. An exhibition of justice, by making a full restoration of property wrongfully accumulated, is a service far more acceptable to the God of mercy, than rivers of tears, years of abstinence, or strains of lamentation and confession, plaintive and protracted as the songs of woe. Confessions,

though written in characters of blood, and reported or posted in every corner of the synagogue, are inadequate to the relief of the wounded, bleeding conscience, unless accompanied with a restitution according to the ability we possess. They may conceal crimes with the *varnish of cob-webs*, but remove not the cause of the flames of condemnation, and the eruptions of guilt. Let the miser, buried alive in his wealth, hear the words of the apostle; "Behold, the hire of the laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, CRIETH; and the cries of them, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth," and instantly reform; then, the trembling, fluttering, sighing of the breast, will be exchanged, for

"What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,

"The soul's calm sunshine, and the heartfelt joy."

But hark! do I hear the murmurings of unbelief, threatening despair?—'Ah me! fain would I walk by the light of virtue, and enjoy the rewards of the just, but my sins and transgressions, like impenetrable clouds or inaccessible mountains, prevent my possessing the glory which I behold afar off.' To such, are the directions of wisdom and mercy addressed, and they may leave their mountain-sins behind, in preferring and pursuing the path of penitence and virtue. "But if the wicked will *return from all his sins*, which he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, *and do that which is right*, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions which he hath committed *shall not be mentioned unto him*; in the righteousness that he hath done he shall live." The most profitable confession of iniquities is, their renunciation. It is the safest antidote for the malady of hypocrites, and the fantasy of religious rogues.

What moneyless *bacchanalian* would not confess his intemperance, if it would purchase a bowl of strong drink? What knave would not own his villainy, if it would defraud you of all your estate? What notorious liar refuses to acknowledge he has reported a falsehood, when the confession entitles him to the veracity of the man of truth? Or point out the puffing hypocrite, that will not *sigh*, and confess he is a *great sinner*, provided others will virtually deny his assertion, by hailing him as a *saint on earth*. And what

will the candid and enlightened think of that religion, whose professors take the most pride, on learning that their confessions of unworthiness, under pretence of humility, are *disbelieved*? Will he call it the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus? As soon would the profane merriment of "the sea-beaten tar" be mistaken, for raptures of religious praise. Real religion consists in actions, not in mere professions. The eye of infinite wisdom scans every motion and intention of the human heart; while mere formality, destitute of genuine piety, but serves the more full exhibition of its moral deformity. Let our profession be as free from "the leaven of the Pharisees," as the religion of our Master is distant, from the impositions of Mahomet. Like the luminary of day, may it continually impart the animating beams of love and friendship, till the frost of misanthropy and the coldness of pride, shall cease to render the region of society, sterile and unfruitful. Then shall the converted world say of devotion,

"If thus delightful thy enrapt'ring pleasures,
 "In these dull regions; how sublimely glorious
 "Mid the circling mansions, where eternal friendship
 "Blooms in perfection."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

REV. SIR—Perhaps the following, taken from Dr. Watt's "Souls in fetters," may be interesting to most of your readers.

There are some noble souls imprisoned from their infancy within the pale of a particular clan or narrow tribe, and they must never dare to think beyond those limits. What shameful bars are laid in the way, to obstruct the progress of knowledge, and the growth of the intellectual world? Generous sentiments are stifled and forbid to be born, lest the parent of them, who perhaps belongs to one particular *sect*, should be suspected of being intimate with another, and a thousand brave and free thoughts crushed to death in the very bud, lest they should look like the offspring of a *foreign tribe*, when they appear in open light.

What a wretched influence *names, sects* and *parties* have upon the commonwealth of christianity! we hardly dare

believe ourselves, when we have found out a truth if our ancestor did not believe it too : O where shall that city stand, whose inhabitants shall traffick in intellectual treasures, and set forth all their new improvements, and acquisitions in open day light, without the danger of public penalties and reproach ? Where shall that happy race be born, who shall see truth with an unbiassed soul, and shall speak it freely to mankind without the fear of parties, or the odium of singularity ? When shall that golden age arise, in which every rich genius shall produce his brightest sentiments to the honor of God, and to the general profit of men, and yet stand exempted from common slander ?—When shall the sacred mines of scripture be digged yet deeper than ever, and the hidden riches thereof be brought out of their long obscurity, to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour ? O that these dark and stormy days of party and prejudice were rolled away ; that men would once more give leave to their fellow christians to spell out some ancient and unknown glories of the person of Christ which are contained in scripture, and to unfold some hidden wonders of the gospel ! The wisest of men know yet but in part : and it is always possible to grow wiser, at least on this side heaven ; but public prejudice is a friend to darkness ; nor could ignorance and error, without this shield have defended their throne so long, among creatures of reason, under the light of divine sun-beams. L. B.

Dr. Watts, says the ingenious and independent author of a work, entitled, “ *The Science of Sanctity*” in his improvements of the mind, gives some very good directions as to study, which have not been followed, either by himself or others in theological researches. “The first direction is to distinguish between *words* and *things*. The greatest danger is in the sacred science of theology, when *settled terms and phrases* have been pronounced *divine* and *orthodox*, which yet have had *no meaning* in them. The scholastic divinity furnishes with numerous instances of this folly.—For many ages all truth, and all heresy have been determined by such senseless tests, and by words without ideas ; such *shibboleths* as these have decided the secular fates of men ; and bishopricks or burnings, mitres or faggots, have

been the rewards of different persons, according as they pronounced these *consecrated syllables*, or not pronounced them. To despise them, to doubt or deny them, was torture and death."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

HOPE.

HOPE may be considered a principle peculiar to mankind ; as we are not certain that any other earth-born creature possesses it in the same manner and degree. It appears to be implanted in us by the Author of our being, as the gift of infinite Parental kindness, and of course designed for wise and noble purposes. His 'works are great and marvellous,' and as said the inspired writer, "in wisdom hast thou made them all."

We are informed in the sacred Register, written as with sun-beams in columns of light, that "every good gift and every perfect is from above ; and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning ;" and that "the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." Hence we may safely infer, that *hope* is designed for a blessing ; not only co-existent with reason and reflection, but commensurate with our being. In the earlier periods of our existence, we look forward through the extended vista of life, and behold happiness, which, however imaginary, captivates our attention, and is enjoyed by hope ; and while progressing to the meridian of manhood, and thence to the sunset of life, we are attended by this companion of mortals, this soother of wretchedness and woes ; nor could we, without hope, long support ourselves amid the various trying scenes, which quicken our descent to the gloomy mansions. Hope supports the unfortunate in the dark hour of adversity, and causes them to anticipate the joys which will follow, when the black cloud is blown over, and they are restored to the sunshine of prosperity. It is this alone which gives tranquility to the dejected bosom, when every ligament of friendship and love is wounded by the arrows of death.—We behold the agonized mother, weeping over the corpse

of her child, from whose pallid cheek life has departed, but her countenance brightens and her tears cease to flow, when, by the hope which is implanted by the benevolent Author of our being, assisted by the mild religion of Jesus, she beholds her child in the arms of infinite kindness, joining in the endless anthems of the blessed.

It is a principle inherent in man to look forward for something better and more glorious than what he has yet received. He is continually pointed by the index of hope to a world lying beyond the narrow *strait* of death, where he hopes to receive from the hand of God, a bright crown of everlasting rejoicing. Suffer us to inquire for what purpose this principle was implanted in the human heart?—Has God determined to withhold the blessing for which he leads us to hope? Will any of his rational offspring, when they awake from the night of death, find that the *anterior* decrees of Jehovah, rendered their hope a mere delusion? Will the Author, thus baffle with a frown, the gift he has bestowed? In the light of reason and scripture we hesitate not, in boldly answering, No; he will not. Is it not infinitely more compatible with the character of the glorious God, to suppose he has designed, in the exercise of infinite goodness, during “the dispensation of the fulness of times,” to “satisfy the desire of every living thing?”

Another characteristic inducing the opinion that hope is a good and perfect gift, and of divine origin, is its *impartiality*. No rational creature, can desire his own eternal felicity, at the exclusion of all others. He rejoices in the contemplation of universal happiness. The expectation of others' felicity blesses the hopes of his own. Though mankind augment each other's misery for the moment, influenced by passion and self-love, yet, can we infer from that circumstance, that any rational child of God, could desire the endless wretchedness of any fellow being? O, Charity, thou child of heaven, what sayest thou?

Hope is not only “an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil,” but it is also a principle which renders society agreeable, gives to life a cheering cordial, and presents at the verge of the grave, a distant shore, blooming with life eternal.

It may be asked, whether this truly animating hope will not be disappointed, unless we possess it regardless of our *accountability* ? and shall we indulge ourselves in such expectations, to the denial of the punishment denounced in the scriptures ? We answer ; the scriptures inform us that “every man shall be rewarded according to his works,” and that “no *chastisement* for the present is joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless, afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby.” This chastisement, or punishment is, therefore, designed, in the divine administration, to bring the sufferers to the acknowledgment of the truth, and the obedience required. This *effect* is agreeable to the desires of every devout and real *christian*. Whether this emendatory punishment be inflicted in this, or a future state, is of little consequence, as it does not alter its nature, and designed effect. Suffer us then to inquire, why the world is so unhappily divided, and *the many* opposing *the few*, because they *believe* what every new-born soul sincerely *desires* may be true, and what they are authorised in professing, by the undivided testimony of the inspired writers, the sincere conviction of their own hearts, the devout prayers of the christian Church, the impartial mediation of the blessed Jesus, and the universal benevolence of the Most High God ? Let us walk, by the light of the lamp of hope, sheath the sword of persecution, turn the tongue of contumely to an instrument of praise and thanksgiving to the Author of all good ; that our righteousness may break forth as the morning, and the light of truth as the noon-day ; and the glory of the Lord go before us, and be our defence, forever. L. B.

THE CLERICAL THERMOMETER.

When the eye lights on the title of this piece, you almost involuntarily inquire, What can the writer mean by such an unintelligible phrase ? But on sober reflection, do you, reader, wish to know ? If you do, read the following quotation, observations and criticisms, and, if good language be that expression of our ideas, by which we are best understood, I engage you will have no great reason to complain.

Ministers of the gospel, when zealously engaged for the

salvation of sinners, through the mediation of the Lord Jesus, are said to be *full of divine fire*. When *less* zealous and animated, they are called *warm*, or *cool*, or *cold*, as the temperature of their heat may be higher or lower. When the clergy, as a profession, become *indifferent*, and *careless* respecting the salvation of sinners, it is called a RELIGIOUS DECLENSION. Now the *instrument* by which the concern or indifference, zeal or dulness of ministers, respecting the conversion and consequent happiness of sinners may be known, is, what I call a *Clerical Thermometer*: it serves to *measure* the degree of heat or fire in that profession. Not stopping to contend about the *technical* correctness of the name and definition, let us hasten to the examination of an example, and its application. The New-England Calvinistic *time-keeper*, the Boston Recorder, of Nov. 10, 1821, under the head "Declension of Religion," has the following remarkable and interesting quotation from one of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Scott's sermons, "on the means of promoting a Revival of Religion." The discourse was founded, and, from the extract, we think, justly founded, on Paul's words, "I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Now to show *how full* of the *blessing* of the *gospel*, a minister ought to be, he says, "If all my parish were converted, and there were *only one* left in his sins, *I* would have a *struggle* with the *Devil* for *that one*." Transporting declaration! and is nothing *short* of this, a *fulness* of the blessing? Surely not. As we cannot suppose the Dr's. parish better than men in general, we may charitably conjecture that were the Dr. as tall as a "mighty Angel," and could he "set one foot on the Atlas and the other on the Andes," and, with a voice louder than Stentor's, address the *whole world*, he would possess the same fulness of the blessing; and while *one* remained in his *sins*, strive for his conversion; though, if Satan had but one captive, it is not probable he would have a severe "struggle," in wresting him, with strength Herculean, from his fiery hands. But now comes the test; if it be a proof of *religious declension*, as we allow, for preachers to be unwilling "to struggle" with the Devil, while *one sinner* is in bondage, what is the state of religion in those churches, where the preachers and people are demonstrating, with all the apparent composure

of an arithmetician, the final impenitence and endless misery of the *many* of mankind, for the *glory* of God and the good of *his* people? This question is as important as though proposed by the ghost of a martyr. And further; if Dr. Scott had no more *divine fire* than he ought, which none will pretend, when he would wrestle with Satan for *one soul*, what must be the temperature of religion in those divines, who expect to rejoice in the impenitence and hopeless misery of the greatest part of their parishioners? Taking the Dr's. statement for a Thermometer, how many *degrees* are they above *Zero*? To use his own instrument in the trial, have we not reason to lament the *declension* of religion in those who are, in point of doctrine, professionally his offspring? Not to exaggerate, would not the temperature of *his* atmosphere be as different from *theirs*, as was Newton's *comet* from the moon? Dr. Scott felt the apostolic electricity when he wrote the above sentence; and would all his admirers *warm* their parishes with the same *holy fire* from heaven, the "struggle with the Devil" would soon be closed; and the *last* sinner being *converted*, the world would enjoy the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; nor need he again ask, as it were from the *tomb*, "Are we not *fishers of ease, FAME, MONEY*: rather, than fishers of MEN?"

A SHORT ANSWER TO A LONG SERMON.

Being requested to examine and answer a Sermon, delivered at Winthrop, (Me.) April 12, 1821, at the annual Fast, by Rev. *David Thurston*, designed to prejudice his hearers against the doctrine of Universal Benevolence, we issue the following remarks, as all which it merits. His text was, *Ezra*. 1, 2, 3, and, as the reader will see by examination, related to the unfriendly and superstitious feelings of the Jews and their neighbors, the Samaritans. That a preacher should wish to excite those enmities, is lamentable. A similar enmity and jealousy prevailed in the time of our Saviour's ministry; and if the parable of the man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, *Luke* 10th, and the treatment of the Samaritan woman, according to *John* 6th, be not enough to correct and suppress in his followers, the same disposition, remarks in this place would be altogether unavailing.

* 4th not 6th

However, Mr. Thurston appears to be so much milder and more reasonable than many opposers of the doctrine, that we are bound to treat him as a *friend at heart*, however direct his opposition in words and sentiments, or inconclusive his arguments. He observes that "certain truths are essential to the gospel. Every system has some cardinal, some fundamental points. Take these from it and you make it something else, another system. You may take from a man a hand, or a foot, or both hands and feet, and though you maim him, he will still be a man. But if you take away his head or his heart, you destroy him." This is applicable to the sermon. Four cardinal points are stated; viz. 1st the real Divinity of Christ, 2d his proper Atonement, 3d regeneration, 4th the eternal duration of future punishment. Every thing else is considered mere "hands and feet," which may well be dispensed with, without affecting his system.

His reasoning in regard to the *real divinity* of Christ is, that 'if his *opposers* are *right*, then *he* and his friends are *wrong*;' which, I think no rational man will dispute. His paragraph on the *atonement* is equally conclusive: that, *if none* have been made, those believe a lie, who believe in one. In relation to *regeneration* his conclusion is, 'that those who deny it, have never experienced it;' and what is plainer? He thinks 'the denial of the doctrine of endless misery would not be so alarming, if it did not lead to the denial of other fundamental truths of more consequence. Indeed he says, that in stating those points, he does *not mean* that to deny *any one* of them would exclude a man from heaven! An individual may deny *either* of them, and yet be saved.' Let us review, and compare these statements with others. Speaking of Christ, he says, "If Christ be *truly* God, such as deny it, do *not* believe in him; and he that believeth not *shall be damned*." But observe, he does not mean but that he may be admitted to heaven, though he do not believe that point! Who understands such logic as that, unless he understands the word, damned, in a limited sense? Again: "If Christ has made a proper atonement *no one can be saved*, unless he *rely* upon it." Still he does *not mean* that no individual shall be admitted to heaven, who denies that atonement! He also tells you, 'that no one who has experienced regeneration will deny it; and yet, allows that if *one*

do deny it, which would prove him, unregenerate, he might still be admitted to heaven. Does not this suppose a man may be saved, without regeneration? Respecting a belief in endless misery, Mr. Thurston says, 'that those who disbelieve it, do *not* believe in the *same* God that *he* does, and if his be the true one, theirs is the false god! and yet, if it led to the denial of no other truth, "it would not be so dangerous." Hence, it is not *very* dangerous, according to his views, to believe in a *false* god, and be an idolator! What christianizing reasoning! Will not the world be immediately illuminated by this *sun* of ratiocination and wisdom? The Calvinistic clergy, of the present and future ages, will have reason to bless their stars, for being introduced on to the stage of life, under the auspices of such a glorious actor. By some inexplicable movement in *tergiversation*, he can persuade a christian church, that statements, directly contradictory, constitute such forcible reasoning, as ought to be printed and preserved for the perusal and instruction of future generations!

Now we ask, in the name of all which is rational, how these things can harmonize? After mentioning four *cardinal points*, allow that *any one* of them may be *safely* denied! As he compared them to the heart or head of a person, it indulges in the denial of a quarter of it, and yet be right, or be saved, and be wrong! So that *four* neighbors, might among them, deny the *whole truth*, and yet be saved! Most admirable reasoning! Whether it be the production of three cardinal points of a sound head, common sense, memory and prudence, (omitting *truth*) is a subject for conjecture. But as Mr. Thurston warns his hearers against reading authors on Universal Benevolence, though, by his quoting from him, we conclude he peruses "*Paine's Age of Reason*," they will not probably see an exposition of his inconsistency and contradictions. Mr. Thurston is informed that we "believe in the Saviour of all men;" that Jesus was a divine person, "the Son of God;" the atonement was *proper*, answering the purpose intended by it; and that men must be regenerated or born from above to be happy; *denying* the Pagan, Mahometan, Catholic and Protestant *heresy* of *endless misery*. This is our doctrine, and so we preach, whether Jews or Samaritans, infidels or christians.

FAREWELL.

THE EDITOR'S SOLEMN PROTESTATIONS.

"What promises, what protestations, what vows have you made."
Dr. E. PAYSON.

In all ages since the apostacy of the church, those who *Protested* against doctrinal or practical corruptions among her priests and leaders, have subjected themselves to the frowns and anathemas of those, whose errors and wickedness were exposed. The first attempts at reformation have appeared presumptuous, and the *many* been opposed to the *few*. Many of those who were deceived by the priests have, from mistaken motives, ambitiously rushed into the field of danger and of death, or have used means and weapons as unbecoming the religion of the Son of God, to oppose and persecute those, who were zealous to *reform* an apostatized church. Reformers whose ambition, boldness, fortitude and zeal were not invincible while life was spared, have rarely succeeded in their attempts. He whose love for what, in his soul, he believed to be the *truth*, was not supreme, whose countenance would change on approaching a dungeon, in chains; his faith tremble at the light of a faggot, and his courage shrink at the threats of his persecutors, though their language were thunder and their eyes twinkled lightning, could promise himself little, as to effecting a reformation of doctrines. The true Witness who said, "Be thou faithful *unto* death," that is, though it expose you to death, "and I will give thee a crown of life," well knew the difficulties attending the removal of those errors and prejudices, which were sanctioned by time, cherished by pride, and strengthened by an unholy ambition for supremacy on earth. Though it is not the design of this publication to encourage controversy, or indulge in personal invective, still it is my privilege to examine and make remarks on any work or religious production which may fall into my hands, for the reformation of doctrines; holding myself accountable for a defence or recantation. All who will open their eyes to see, will discover, that a refutation of a man's *doctrine*, while *he* is treated with respectful language, is no proof of enmity to *him*, unless their identity can be proved. Since a man may be innocent in an error, to attempt to correct him, is rather a proof of *friendship*, than otherwise. That any man, however learned, or eloquent, or famed for talents,

should be *above* our notice, is a concession inconsistent with the boldness of him, who said an angel should be anathematized, if he preached another gospel. Or who can be considered the *follower* of Christ, that will say *Rabboni* to men, whose doctrine he is convinced is erroneous, lest he should not receive the applause of those who honor them with the respect due to infallibility? Must those who know the truth in the love of it, submit to the degraded feelings of such, as are willing to be *cyphers* in the presence of their preacher, if they may be written at his *right hand*, individually augmenting his importance in a *tenfold* proportion? These observations and questions are important, and should be engraven on the heart with the pencil of heaven. Had the reformers been influenced by such servility as we oppose, the right of expressing an opinion would now have slept in concealment, and the tree of gospel liberty remained in the shell of priestcraft, nor waved its branches in America, perfuming the world with its fragrance.

I do, therefore, *most solemnly protest* against that "time-serving policy" by which doctrines directly opposite are blended together, producing a mixed *existence*, ashamed of itself and disowned by its parents. I have respect to certain *Calvinist* and *Hopkinsian* ministers, in their professing one doctrine and preaching another; or in feeding their hearers with Arminian bread, which they are forbid to eat because of its pollution, except on a Calvinistic table. It is a truth which Heaven will approve, that if Calvinism be true, Arminianism is false; and, if Arminianism be true, Calvinism is false. Then from what justifiable motive are they so intermixed by the Calvinist preachers, that but few of their hearers know what they believe? If Arminians are able so to preach, as not to be suspected of embracing Calvinism, why cannot the others so speak, as not to be mistaken for Arminians? Are they less able to express their meaning, or do they mean to be misunderstood? They do know that some of their hearers, have no mistrust of their holding to the *five points*. In the name of *Calvin*, *Zuinglius*, *Melancthon*, and *Gale*, *Robbinson*, *Gill*, I do *protest* against that conduct, as being "inconsistent with sound Orthodoxy." However highly I may appreciate their talents, erudition, and good conduct in general, I must

consider them unjustifiable in the above respect, unless the deception practised upon the people, is shown to be consistent with the ministry of Jesus !

Furthermore. I do *solemnly protest* against the conduct of all those professors of the christian religion, who defame each other merely on account of a difference of opinion on doctrinal subjects, and who use their influence to destroy the reputation and usefulness of those, whose light is as independent of their exertions, as the truth of God is above the *mixture of decrees and contingences*.

I PROTEST against the conduct of all such, as indulge themselves and their ministers in pointing out, not to say, making a burlesque, of the supposed, erroneous opinions or practices of others, even to accuse men of the worst of crimes, of being christian *Hyenas*, "feasting on the price of blood; the blood of immortals;" and yet become intolerant and angry at the exposure of contradictions in their own productions, which their whole conclave of divines, is not able to gainsay or refute.

Lastly. As a professor of that religion which is given for wise, noble and benevolent purposes, whose leading principles are supreme love to God and good will towards men, demonstrated by acts of justice, beneficence, and charity, I *protest* against all the hidden things of dishonesty, sinful craftiness and spiritual wickedness in high places, that, with all long-suffering, and by speaking the truth in love, I may commend myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God! Amen.

AN INSTRUCTIVE SERMON.

A learned, eloquent preacher, delivered a discourse on the Missionary cause, begging with all his might that his audience would contribute generously for the salvation of souls, each of which was worth more than a thousand worlds. But before he closed, he told them that five dollars, *one* dollar, twenty-five, or even *one* cent, *might* be the means of saving thousands of them from the justice of God; or the endless misery which they justly deserved. A man of reputed generosity, was asked how he liked the sermon. He replied, it was the most *instructive* discourse he ever

heard on the missionary subject. Then, why did you not contribute? Why, said he, while he maintained any consistency, and kept up the price of Heathens, I was affected, and did not see the *craft*; but when he fell on the price, without any one's asking it, so that a thousand souls, individually worth more than a thousand worlds, could be bought for a mere trifle, *my eyes were opened* and the mystery explained. Do you believe the ministers would preach such tearful sermons, to bribe the justice of God and purchase souls at such a *discount*, if they had none of the money? Yes, indeed, says the honest devotee to missionaries, I don't believe they have a cent of it; but they *expect* to be *paid* for their labors at the judgment, and have a *hundred fold* for every cent they raise by *disinterested* labors.



PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

The following is a serious Parody, on an example of Pulpit Eloquence, in the Recorder of Nov. 10, 1821.

'Now then, my friends, my reasons are all before you, and I hope to be justified by your consciences, while I execute the commission given me—and as a watchman sound the alarm. I therefore solemnly declare, in the name of God, that there is a' **SUCCESSFUL** 'war waged by all the divine attributes against sin—that the sacred rights of Heaven have taken the field—that every glory of the Godhead holds a livid lightning pointing at every **CRIME**—' that the inviolable honor of heaven's King is enlisted, and is coming down to' **SUBDUE** 'a rebellious world. In equally solemn tones I declare, as my office obliges, and call on every angel to witness, that in this war, *God is right and the World is wrong!* These great truths I will declare, and hope to pronounce with my dying breath, *God is right and the World is wrong!* I wish they were set forth in broad letters upon every forehead, and with a pencil dipped in heaven, were written upon every heart. I wish they were set upon the frontispiece of every book, and posted in sun-beams at the corner of every street—that they were written with the point of a diamond in the rock forever—

God is right and the World is wrong! I would that these ponderous truths might pass from land to land—prostrate nations of unknown tongues, and rolling through every climate, might bring a *humbled world* to ask for mercy at a Saviour's feet. Standing on my watch-tower, I am commanded, if I see aught of evil approaching to give the alarm. I again solemnly declare that I do see evil approaching; I see a storm collecting in the' CHURCHES; 'I discover the emotion of the troubled' DOCTRINES: 'I hear the roar of threatening WINDS.' CHURCH and STATE 'seem mingled in the conflict, and I cry to those for whom I watch, *A storm! A storm!* Get you' out of the snare, 'or you are swept away. Oh! what is it I see.?' I see Christendom convulsed and falling in ruins—the sanctuaries of worship 'disappearing in flames'—'nations,' called christian, 'rising' in arms 'as from under ground'—the Star of Bethlehem falling in war—the Sun of Righteousness veiled in blood—the innocent 'in chains dragged before the damning bar, and some of my dear readers,' in the character of Priests, their Judges. 'I see them cast from the battlements of the judgment scene! My God!' let not the delusive pit close upon them forever! O, rise again, Bethlehem's Star! O, break forth in seven-fold splendor, great Sun of Righteousness! and illumine Immanuel's land with thy cheering beams!

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AND DESTRUCTION.

In continuing the Statement of different views among christians, in relation to the plan of Redemption, we observe;

Many sincere, zealous and worthy christians, dissenting from all those who believe in the *endless misery of the wicked*, entertain, nevertheless, nearly the same views, in relation to the universality and efficacy of the mediation of Jesus, with those who hold that "salvation is possible for all men;" that it restores all men to a probationary state, so that the *offers* of salvation are freely and sincerely made to all, and may be accepted through the merits of Christ, to the everlasting felicity of the whole world; but, if any refuse the offers of grace and pardon, and continue in disobedience till death, they will be rejected of Christ, and be *destroyed*

without remedy. As the scriptures plainly assert that the proud and all who do wickedly, shall be burnt up, root and branch, or be punished with everlasting destruction, which is their end, it gives no support to the doctrine of *perpetual* existence, in exquisite torture. It implies the *end of their existence*, as well as misery. If *endless misery* were a doctrine of the Bible, it would have been expressed in positive terms, as is the destruction of the impenitent. At the day of Judgment all men will be rewarded according to their *works*; and those who have *repented, believed, been born again, and obeyed* the gospel, will be *rewarded with eternal glory*; while the impenitent, unbelieving, unregenerate and disobedient will be condemned to everlasting destruction, and *cease to exist, FOREVER.*

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SALVATION OF ALL MEN.

Professors of the Christian religion who deny the doctrine of *endless sufferings*, and also, of the destruction of the wicked, as implying an end of existence, believe in the final Salvation of the *whole world*. God commended his love to the world while sinners, by sending his Son to be the propitiation for their sins, to give himself a ransom for all and taste death for every man, that all might know and obey the truth, to their everlasting salvation. Whether the *death of Christ* were necessary to satisfy the demands of justice, or only as a commendation of the Father's love to the world, and, a demonstration of the Son's filial and perfect obedience; or whether it be considered as a complete, safe and glorious example of patience, and resignation to the divine will under afflictions, persecutions and sufferings, for all to imitate wheresoever his religion is revealed and taught; he is, in the proper sense, the Mediator between God and men, and the unfailing medium of life and immortality to the world. All the threatenings or denunciations of punishment to the wicked, contained in the Scriptures, should be explained in conformity to the *Paternal* character of God, who expressly says he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. The Deity is infinite, unchangeable and perfect; it is, therefore, most reasonable to consider the plan of Redemption, as a part of his original

purpose in the creation and government of the world, wisely directed to the display of his highest glory, in bringing the whole human family to the highest ultimate perfection of which our nature is capable. Men are accountable to God according to their capacity, and knowledge of his requirements; and are rewarded, if not in this, in a future state. Punishment for disobedience is disciplinary and reclaiming, and under the different administrations of the one Lord, efficacious to the punished, in the subduction of their enmity, the contrition of their hearts, and by the gracious interposition of the Spirit of truth and light, produces a cordial subjection to the Prince of Peace, the Saviour of sinners. When the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, appears in the heart; it teaches the denial of ungodliness, and the practice of sobriety, righteousness and virtue in this life; by which believers and lovers of the truth, have a special salvation, while the unbelieving and disobedient, remain under the wrath of God, *meaning* the curse or condemnation of the law which they disobey; and yet, that unbelief will finally give way to evidence, hatred be conquered by love, impenitence be succeeded by penitence, condemnation be removed by justification, death be swallowed up in victory, and Christ resign the reconciled world or kingdom to the Father, and be subject to Him who put all things under him, that GOD HIMSELF may be ALL IN ALL. Amen.

OBSERVATIONS.

The candid, careful and intelligent reader, it is humbly believed, will find, upon examination and reflection, that the four Statements which we have given of the scheme of Redemption, embrace the *essential* doctrines of all Christians upon that interesting point. The first statement, (No. I. page 8, 9,) is the real doctrine of 'Election and Reprobation,' and all who embrace it are entitled to the name of *Calvinists*; the second, (on page 13, of No. I.) is the true doctrine of 'Salvation possible for all men,' and those who believe it, are justly denominated *Arminians*. Those professing the belief just stated, of the 'endless destruction of the wicked,' should be called *Destructionists*; and such as anticipate the Salvation of all men, should be known by the

denomination of *Universalists*, if by any name now ascribed to Christians. If such names are in use, each professor ought to be open and frank in declaring his views, wearing the signet of his doctrine; but, when, by virtue of a divine Union, all Christians are Brethren and Friends, those nominal distinctions may be buried in oblivion, and the Church universal be denominated *Christians*.

In this attempt to simplify the discordant doctrines of numerous *leaders* and authors, much pains has been taken to ascertain facts, and without feelings of prejudice or selfishness, be guided by that impartiality in writing, which we might reasonably demand of others. We believe all may be comprised under the above heads, when the reasons for concealment of opinions are removed. Had no one 'bought oxen that must be proved, purchased land that required attention, married a wife that must be pleased, or lost a father yet unburied,' no doubt the veil of our temples would be rent, and those who "read Moses every sabbath day," would be dismissed, or "come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ."

Another reason, for such a diversity of denominations, may be the following. The above *doctrines* are, by the ingenuity of men, with their additions, diminutions, alterations, transpositions and explanations, capable of innumerable modifications, productive of new *names, terms* and *orders*, suited to the pride and fancy of ambitious *leaders*, which, however destitute of any real appropriate meaning, will, for awhile, excite the wonder of the multitude, and make novel religious figures in the world. Christianity is made a profession much resembling a *Kaleidoscope*, in which a few doctrines, however simple in themselves, are sufficiently diverse, to present, by being placed in different positions, every shade, color and figure that curiosity could require. But we soberly contend, that the pretended illumination of the understanding, by the invention of new *names* and *sects*, where the *real doctrine* is by analysis the same, is as really delusive, as to pretend that the *Kaleidoscope* is the most profitable introduction to the study of divinity. Are they not rather the false glare of human ingenuity and learning; the mere *ignis-fatuus* of immoderate zeal, wild imagination, and sanctimonious sophistry, without an original trait of doctrine, by which their difference can be demonstrated? If so,

let us direct our best attention to *things* instead of *words*, and examine the foregoing Statements, to ascertain whether a *fifth* can be made, essentially different, in relation to the salvation of sinners through Jesus, the one Mediator: remembering, it is equally true of *doctrines*, as of any science,

“A little learning is a dangerous thing;
“Drink deep, or taste not the Pyerian spring”

A STRANGE CONVERSION.

Being in conversation with a most zealous professor of the *religion of endless misery*, he declaimed most pointedly against Universalism; calling it a licentious, dangerous doctrine, *leading* into every species of *crime and wickedness*. He was asked, how he *knew* what *influence* the doctrine *would have*? He replied, that if any man was *qualified to judge* of its licentious *tendency*, he was; for he had been a *strong* believer of the doctrine, and rested his eternal interest on it, for *twenty* years; but was now confident it was false, and destructive to the *peace of society*. The writer replied to him, that to say nothing of his imprudence in professing it so long, and the *licentious life* it must have produced, he would acknowledge his surprise! having never seen a man before, who had believed the doctrine for years, and then renounced it for the papal doctrine of endless misery. But, said he, to his friend, Dear sir, how many people do you think there are in this town, who *really believe* Universalism? He replied, ‘I doubt whether there is *one*!’ Indeed, sir; well, it is a hard doctrine to believe; how many did ever you see that you thought were *firm in the faith*? ‘Not one,’ said he, ‘in my whole life, that *really* believed it.’ Sure enough! and did *you* ever believe it yourself, sir? ‘No,’ he replied, ‘I *never* did; though I *tried* to for twenty years!’ So I thought, friend, by the manner in which you *imply* you spent your life; and if you have *reformed*, I hope you will never again *pretend* you ever believed the doctrine; for your *own words* would give you the *contradiction*!

A NEW CATECHISM.

The following *questions* and *answers* were suggested, on perusing an Extract from a Sermon of the Rev. John Wesley, *versus* the doctrine of Election and Reprobation, as held by Calvinists. See *P. U. Magazine*, V. 1. No. 2. p. 38, 39.

Question. Who is God?

Answer. God is a Spirit, infinite in wisdom, power and goodness; the Creator and Governor of all things; good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Q. What would be *blasphemy* against the *true* God?

A. 'To say a certain portion of mankind were from eternity, elected to salvation, and all the rest devoted to damnation by the determinate council of God, is *blasphemy*.'

Q. What effect might we suppose the preaching of such doctrine would have?

A. 'It would not only make the ears of *Christians* tingle, but virtually destroy all the divine attributes: overturn both justice, mercy and truth, and represent the most holy God as worse than the Devil.'

Q. Can you make such harsh language as that, appear reasonable and correct?

A. I religiously believe I can; 'for that doctrine makes the God of heaven, more *false*, more *unjust*, and more *cruel*, than his great Adversary. He would be more *false*, because the Devil, liar as he is, hath never said, he *willed* the salvation of *all men*, and God has; more *unjust*, because the Devil cannot, if he would, be guilty of such injustice as that doctrine ascribes to our Father in heaven; more *cruel*, because that restless Spirit might be tempted to seduce and injure others, from a mistaken motive of diminishing his own sufferings, whereas, God is *unalterably* blissful of himself, and his happiness admits of neither addition nor diminution; and yet, he dooms his uncreated offspring to the flames of hell forever!! Such is the supposed author of that horrible decree, for me to ascribe which to the God of our Saviour Jesus, would be nothing short of *blasphemy*.'

Q. How would the *praise* of such a God be celebrated?

A. 'We should say, mourn, O ye heavens! for the Lord God Almighty reigns in the endless misery of his own offspring, and your numbers will be *few*! Shout, O hell!

for your burning regions shall be peopled with numberless immortals, whom God hath destined for endless suffering, wholly irrespective of all human merit.'

Q. How would it affect the great Adversary to hear the pretended ministers of Jesus, declare such horrible facts?

A. 'He would rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and approving their labors, tell them to cry aloud and spare not; for they were sent by him who is like a devouring lion, destroying in his anger, without a disposition to be merciful.'

Q. How must we *treat those* who are so unfortunate as to embrace and defend the doctrine of partial Election and Reprobation?

A. 'If we are the disciples of him who was our faithful High Priest, we shall make a distinction between the *doctrine*, and *those* who are unfortunately *deceived by it*; and with whatever severity we animadvert on the former, we shall treat the professors with respect for their crudition, talents and piety; with friendship, because the children of the same common Father; with tenderness, that we may imitate the blessed Jesus, do as we would be done by, and if possible, save them from the destructive snare of AN EVIL One.'

MODERN PROMISES AND PROPHECIES EXPLAINED.

The *spirit* of all true Prophecies is the same, whether they are *recorded* in the canon of inspiration or a sermon from the pen of a modern author. That the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh and our sons prophecy in the last days, is a scripture promise. The method for *explaining modern prophecies* is a matter of importance; and I think the following observation respecting it, just and reasonable; viz. the Spirit means to be understood, when dictating the pen of modern Prophets, in the same *natural and unrestricted sense*, in which its dictations *appear* in the *language* of ancient promise and prophecy. Now it is by no means certain, that prophets always understand the full import of the language they use; for if they did, they would be liable to show more of imperfect nature, in their predictions, than of the fruits of the Spirit, which searcheth the *deep things of God*.

In the *Boston Recorder* of Nov. 3, 1821, we have some glorious promises or predictions, though by no means admitting the supposition, that the writer entered feelingly into the views of the Spirit, by which the language and sentiments of his pen were dictated. That you may know what is the meaning of the modern prophecies, you are referred to passages of scripture, which we hope you will peruse with the greatest attention. Dr. Wood, Professor of Theo. at Andover, was the medium, through which such great and good things were communicated to the Recorder.

1. "God will give us better days;" and I will give you *Pastors* according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding: As it is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Jer. 3, 15. John 6. 45.

2. "The spirit will be copiously poured out upon our churches and colleges, upon our cities and our country;" for I the Lord love judgment; I hate robbery for burnt-offering; and I will direct their work in truth. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; in the habitations of dragons where each lay shall be grass with reeds and rushes. The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad; and the ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion. Isai. 61. 8, and 35. 5, 1, 10.

3. "Christians will grow in grace;" till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Eph. 4. 13.

4. "A host of faithful ministers will be raised up, whose ruling passion shall be love to Christ; who shall publish the glad tidings and extend far and wide the triumphs of the cross." And many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. Dan. 12. 4, Luke 2. 10.

5. "Converts shall be numerous as the drops of morning dew;" and all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. Psalm 22. 27.

6. "The everlasting gospel shall no more be a savour

of death unto death;" for they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord, for *all* shall know me from the *least to the greatest*; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be *no more death*, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away—for these words are true and faithful. Heb. 8. 11, Rev. 21. 4, 5.

7. "Hostility against its heavenly doctrines shall no more lift up its head;" for violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. Isai. 60. 18.

8. "The glorious reign of Christ shall come;" he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and *all nations shall serve him*. For he must *reign* till he hath put all enemies under his feet; and the last enemy shall be destroyed, *that is*, Death. And when *all things* shall be *subdued* unto him, *then also* shall the Son himself be subject unto Him that did put all things under him, that God may be ALL in ALL. Psalm 72. 8, 11, 1 Cor. 15. 25, 26, 28.

9. "All the ends of the earth shall look to him and be saved, and a world of ransomed sinners join in his praise;" as it is written, Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb forever and forever. Isai. 45. 22, Rev. 5. 13.

10. "The Lord shall hasten it in his time:" God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? He hath made known unto us the mystery of his will, which, according to his good pleasure he hath purposed in himself: that in (his time) the *dispensation* of the *fulness of times*, he might gather together in one *all things in Christ*, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him; Jesus

Christ our Lord and Saviour. Num. 23. 19, Eph. 1. 9, 10.

To the above *ten* predictions of Dr. Wood, *explained by Revelation*, I add *one* of my own, which I hope the Dr.'s friends will examine with proper care.

When *his* prophecies are fulfilled, the five points of his Calvinism will be universally considered as the *heads* of a doctrinal hydra, coeval with superstition, and its longevity limited by the universal prevalence of reason, benevolence and truth. So MOTE IT BE.

THINGS HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD ILLUSTRATED.

"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

2 THESS. 2. 11, 12.

Does the reader acknowledge that this passage is hard to be understood? Would he not find it difficult to give an explanation, were it solicited, with which he would himself be satisfied? Even should he silence an inquirer, would not many vulnerable points be discovered by himself, which he would rejoice to find invisible to others? These questions are proposed with sobriety, and the reader is requested to answer them as in the presence of God. But we are confident that by far the greater part of the people, are unsettled in their minds respecting this text, and will be anxious to see an explanation, however novel, if it extricate the character of our heavenly Father from that allegation, which expositors have brought against it. Indeed, the exposition must be entirely new, or the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, must be considered the *sender* of *strong* and *damning delusions*! It is an evidence of one's being accessory in the deception, to slide off by equivocations, and say, God *permitted* the delusion. The text is express, "God shall *send* strong delusion, *that they should* believe a lie," &c. There is no more *permission*, than in *sending* the servants of *Jesus*. If they are damned for believing a lie, and believe the lie, because *God sent* the delusion, and sufficiently *strong* to produce its effect, in what character does it present the God of truth and love? Does not that exposition charge God with a *damning delusion*?

This is a part of what is rightly named "the *offensive* doctrines of grace." But, recollect, reader, it is not the *grace of God*, for that brings *salvation to all men*, instead of a destructive deception. But, who *loves* the character of the deluder? If panthers and tygers love creatures of their own nature and description, we may presume that *deceivers* love him who *they* say, deceives or deludes men to their eternal damnation! Here let us pause, for a moment, and attend to a few serious and important questions. Because, if the God we adore, *send* strong delusions, where, beneath these heavens, shall we look for safety? Shall we call on the *reverend clergy*? But how do we know they are not *sent* by him, who *sends* strong delusions? They surely profess to be in his service; and who knows but they are *sent on that inglorious errand*? None of them will be offended at these suggestions, unless they have set themselves above all which they call God, or worship. But would the pious divines be willing to set off their names with the abbreviations of Sender of Strong Delusion? If we had not a better opinion of them, than they have of *their God*, they would lose all their influence and strength, and salaries likewise! For, who, let us ask, would employ a man to preach, believing he would bring a great delusion, that his hearers might believe a lie, and be damned? In whom do people repose the most confidence, while they believe their God will *send* strong deceptions, but that the preacher, whom he has *sent*, will *not* deceive them? If this be not worshipping the creature more than the Creator, what is? But, dear reader, which is the most reasonable, to suppose the learned, wise and pious ministers are mistaken, and have widely misunderstood the text, or, that "the wisdom which is from above, pure, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy," is engaged in deluding, deceiving and damning the greatest part of the world? Look over this question and answer it as reason may dictate; but, let God be true, though every man a liar.

Having briefly exposed a few of the innumerable absurdities, which follow the exposition that divines give the text, let us seek for a light which will illumine this region of darkness, and unfold the meaning of a passage, the most enigmatical and perplexing of any found in the letters of

Paul. This may be done, by paying suitable attention to the preceding context. Observe, in verses 9 and 10, we read of him "whose coming is after the working of satan, with all power and signs, and *lying* wonders, and with *all* *deceivableness* or delusion." And *who is it* that is thus described? Open your bible, reader, and know whether the answer be correct. We assert, that omitting the *two first words*, in the 9th verse, (*even him*) which are printed in *italic*, to designate an interpolation, or that they were added by the translators, the literal reading is, that the Lord Jesus is the personage spoken of! Look for yourself. Unless we supply some words, Jesus is the character spoken of, whose coming is after the working of satan, with lying wonders, and all delusion!

To read and understand it, without an addition, would be deemed, by many, blasphemous; because it ascribes the *deception to the Son of God!*

But, look a moment. Is it worse to suppose that he whom the Father hath sent, is a deceiver, than that his God sends strong delusion? The same word which is rendered *deceivableness* in the 10th verse, is rendered, *delusion* in the 11th. These words are perfectly synonymous, though, according to our English dictionaries, the latter is more incompatible with the character of God, than the former. We think it will appear evident to those who are not fettered by education and prejudice, that the same character and the same deception is intended, in both cases. We mean that he, whose coming is with all *deceivableness* or *delusion*, sends the same in its *strength*, to make men believe a lie. If the God spoken of in verse 11th, mean our Father in heaven, we should *honor* the Son *as* we do the Father, in calling him the agent by which it was effected; and the literal, unaltered words of the context, will support us in so doing. But to break up the connexion, as expositors do, and say, God sends *deceivableness*, because the man of sin comes with *all* *deception*, is horrible beyond compare. Would not the delusion be sufficiently strong and efficacious, in the hands of him who had *it all*, without the woful interposition of the God of truth? But we are told it is *God* who sends the delusion, according to text. Be it so; but let us inquire, *what* God sends it, according to the preceding

context? Is it not the *god of deception*? By casting an eye back to verse 3d, you will find the man of sin, the son of perdition spoken of; "who *opposeth*, and *exalteth himself*, above all which is called God, or that is worshipped, so that *as God*, he sitteth in the temple of God, showing *himself* that he is *God*."

This is the *only* God which is mentioned, from the 4th to the 11th verse; and is called the *opposing, self-exalted, self-shown* God. He is above idols, which are also called Gods; for they are dependent, being *made, named and exalted* by their *worshippers*; their godship is creature-made, and they are inactive, speechless and senseless. But the mysterious iniquities of the god of whom Paul spake, had already began their operation, when he wrote; and he who prevented the exposure of it, would continue so to do, till taken out of the way. Should it be thought presumptuous to call the man of sin, *a god*, we would remark, that we ascribe nothing worse to him, than others do to the true God; and, further, that the scriptures warrant us in so doing; where we read of "the God of this world or age," 2 Cor. 4. 4; "whose God is their appetite," Phil. 3. 19 and many other places. "Though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be Gods many and Lords many," still there is but one God of truth and mercy, on whom we may depend, without disappointment, or fear of treachery and delusion. Yea, should men and angels attempt to destroy the glory of his character, by representing him in the place of a deceiver, we would do well to remind them, that it was not the first time the glory of the incorruptible God, had been changed to the character of corruptible man.

1. If the God whom Paul worshipped *sent* strong delusion, why did he represent the *self-styled* god, on the side of opposition? Did the *opposing* god strive to prevent the deception? He must, in order to *oppose*! When Jehovah becomes the immediate cause of man's delusion, the ancient maxim must be reversed, and read, "Great is the *LIE* and it shall prevail!" But attribute the deception to whom it belonged, the *god of that age*, and the whole mystery vanishes in a moment. If the translators had done much for verse 11, as they did for verse 9, the text would

have read, "For this cause, *that* god shall, &c." That is; because some of the Thessalonian Church, received the truth, but not in the love of it, being hypocrites, the god of deception would take advantage of their situation, and make them believe a lie.

2. The *revelation* of the man of sin, is his destruction.—When the *cause* of deception is *revealed* or made known, men will no longer be *deceived* or *deluded* by it. On the opposite, when Jesus is revealed in glory, he will be beloved and obeyed. The reason why he was rejected was, because men were *deceived*. But when the *truth* is made known, the deception is destroyed. If the false god be a deceiver, the true God will oppose him by exposing the deception; and then he will not exist, any more than darkness can in the light of heaven! The deluding of men made the god of that age, *inglorious*; a revelation of the truth will render Jesus, *glorious*. The former made men believe a lie, that they might be *damned*; the latter leads them into the *truth*, which is *salvation*. Such is the striking contrast of the two characters. If our views be correct, the 2d chapter of Thessalonians, so far from foretelling a great *apostacy* by the *revelation* of that Wicked, foretold the *prevention* of a greater apostacy, in that Church, by the *revelation* of Jesus, and the *destruction* of the man of sin.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY.

DIED, at Westbrook, Nov. 28, 1821, the widow *Thankful Berry*, aged 78. It might be said of her, as of Mary, she had found the one thing needful; the supreme love of Christ in her heart. We speak to the disparagement of none, in saying, that for industry, economy, liberality and friendship united, Mrs. Berry has not been excelled by any woman in the vicinity of her residence. In her, every amiable virtue seemed to meet, forming an almost perfect moral picture. Not a tongue of slander can be raised against her, without doing violence to the sacred rules of truth. In her old age she was calm, patient and resigned. In whatever situation she was in, she had learned therewith to be content. During her last illness she viewed DEATH as a friend, though the

for your burning regions shall be peopled with numberless immortals, whom God hath destined for endless suffering, wholly irrespective of all human merit.'

Q. How would it affect the great Adversary to hear the pretended ministers of Jesus, declare such horrible facts?

A. 'He would rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and approving their labors, tell them to cry aloud and spare not; for they were sent by him who is like a devouring lion, destroying in his anger, without a disposition to be merciful.'

Q. How must we *treat those* who are so unfortunate as to embrace and defend the doctrine of partial Election and Reprobation?

A. 'If we are the disciples of him who was our faithful High Priest, we shall make a distinction between the *doctrine*, and *those* who are unfortunately *deceived by it*; and with whatever severity we animadvert on the former, we shall treat the professors with respect for their erudition, talents and piety; with friendship, because the children of the same common Father; with tenderness, that we may imitate the blessed Jesus, do as we would be done by, and if possible, save them from the destructive snare of AN EVIL One.'

MODERN PROMISES AND PROPHECIES EXPLAINED.

The *spirit* of all true Prophecies is the same, whether they are *recorded* in the canon of inspiration or a sermon from the pen of a modern author. That the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh and our sons prophecy in the last days, is a scripture promise. The method for *explaining modern prophecies* is a matter of importance; and I think the following observation respecting it, just and reasonable; viz. the Spirit means to be understood, when dictating the pen of modern Prophets, in the same *natural and unrestricted sense*, in which its dictations *appear* in the *language* of ancient promise and prophecy. Now it is by no means certain, that prophets always understand the full import of the language they use; for if they did, they would be liable to show more of imperfect nature, in their predictions, than of the fruits of the Spirit, which searcheth the *deep things of God*.